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Art park, greenspace coming soon to Canby

Public project - Plans call for an old filbert orchard to become a space for local artwork

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CANBY -- A group of volunteers is working with city officials to transform an old filbert orchard near the Canby Ferry into a public space to display local artwork and horticulture.

For more than five years the nonprofit Canby Livability Coalition has sought public support for a 9,300-square-foot Canby Art Park and Greenspace at the corner of Northwest Territorial Road and North Holly Street, about two miles from the ferry dock.

Under a 2002 agreement with the city, the coalition agreed to pay the city half the cost of land the city bought from Holly Corners, a local housing developer. By November 2006, the group raised the \$35,000 to make its payment to the city.

In May the group unveiled a local landscape designer's rendering of what the space will look like when complete. Coalition president Bob Tice hopes the work will be a "two-year project."

Liz Thorstenson's design includes a wooden walkway, a water fountain and space for local artworks such as animal sculptures and other outdoor installations that have a nature theme. Also included is space for native plants and a kiosk that will inform visitors about Canby history.

Three pathways will connect the park to the nearby residential area and to sidewalks on Holly Street and Territorial Road.

Plants will be raised by Canby High School teacher Terri Cummings and students in her agri-science classes. Local artists will be encouraged to create interactive and educational artwork for the park, and include use of natural elements such as wind, sound and light.

Tice said solicitation of artwork would begin no later than next year, after the first phase of the park construction -- developing the irrigation system for the fountain and the sprinklers in the park space -- is completed.

Tice said the coalition is focused on finishing the fundraising needed to start the first construction phase by fall. He said the group needs to raise at least \$15,000 for the first phase to get under way.

The coalition has been selling bricks for the park at local venues such as First Friday and the Canby Farmers Market this summer.

The bricks, which can be personalized with words by the purchaser, range in price from \$50 for a 4-by-6-inch brick to \$1,500 for a 3-foot-by-4-foot brick.

Tice said the group's goal is to sell 350 bricks, most of which will be integrated into the walkway area of the park. Some of the larger bricks will be placed in the Community Circle area at the entrance to the park.

The group also has also been seeking foundation grants and support from local business. Oregon Cultural Trust, the Clackamas County Cultural Coalition and the Starbucks Foundation have given the group grants for the project.

Tice, who lives near the park space, said the project grew from neighborhood residents' ideas that the area needed a space where children and adults could play and relax.

After rejecting the idea of a traditional playground park due to concerns about traffic surrounding the area, the coalition developed the current park concept based on ideas and feedback from local residents.

JillMarie Wiles, the group's executive vice president, said the park will be "a real anchor piece" for the community. She said her passion for the project stems from a desire to create something that future generations of Canby residents can enjoy.

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